

Message Text

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13
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-07 IO-13 OMB-01 /078 W
----- 045069

R 220911Z OCT 76
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 161
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, SY, IS
SUBJECT: SYRIAN MEDIA CRITICIZES ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW
U.S. ARMS SUPPLIES TO ISRAEL

REF: DAMASCUS 6854

1. SYRIAN PRESS DURING PAST TEN DAYS HAS PUBLISHED CRITICISM OF RECENT U.K.S. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF NEW WEAPONS TO BE SUPPLIED TO ISRAEL. SAMPLE CAPTIONS: "FORD SUPPLIES ISRAEL WITH NEW EXTREMELY SECRET WEAPONS. ALLON WAS ASSURED FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH FORD AND KISSINGER--'ISRAEL WILL GET EVERYTHING IT WANTS.' WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN--'SUPPLYING ISRAEL WITH MODERN WEAPONS SERVES INTERESTS OF U.S. THERE IS NO LIMIT TO OUR ASSISTANCE IN PROVIDING ISRAEL WITH WEAPONS.'"

2. LOCAL PRESS BELATEDLY MENTIONED ALLON PLAN PUBLISHED BY FOREIGN AFFAIRS. OCTOBER 20 AL-BAATH COLUMNIST CLAIMED U.S. AND ISRAEL TRYING DELUDE WORLD PUBLIC OPINION INTO THINKING ISRAEL SEEKING SETTLEMENT OF MIDDLE EAST ISSUES. HOWEVER,
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ASSERTED COLUMNIST, "ALLON PROPOSAL, LIKE KISSINGER POLICY

WAS MEANT TO FUEL FLAMES OF ARAB CONFLICT BY TEMPTING ONE OF THE CONFRONTATION STATES TO RELAX ITS GUARD." HE ASSERTED THAT INTERESTS OF U.S. AND ISRAEL OBLIGE THEM TO UNDERMINE ARAB SOLIDARITY AND REFUSE TO RESOLVE PALESTINIAN QUESTION. HE CONCLUDED, "THE ARABS WOULD NOT HAVE LOST SOME OF THEIR LANDS WERE IT NOT FOR MACHINATIONS OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM."

3. COMMENT: RATHER LACKLUSTER CRITICISM OF U.S. AND OF ALLON PROPOSAL REFLECTS PREOCCUPATION OF SYRIAN MEDIA WITH LEBANESE CRISIS AND ARAB SUMMIT. NOW THAT PROGRESS MADE ON SYRO-EGYPTIAN RECONCILIATION AND SYRO-PALESTINIAN RAPPROCHEMENT APPARENTLY FORTHCOMING WE ANTICIPATE GREATER FOCUS ON ISRAEL IN LOCAL MEDIA AND RENEWED EXPRESSION OF SUSPICIONS THAT U.S. ACTIONS AIM AT UNDERMINING ARAB SOLIDARITY AND PREVENTING MOVEMENT TOWARD PEACE SETTLEMENT.
MURPHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, ARMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 OCT 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DAMASC07233
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760396-1127
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761025/aaaaavba.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 DAMASCUS 6854
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 JUN 2004 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <07 OCT 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SYRIAN MEDIA CRITICIZES ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW U.S. ARMS SUPPLIES TO ISRAEL
TAGS: PFOR, SY, IS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006